

Remarks

In response to the Office Action mailed June 22, 2005, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the pending claims. To further the prosecution of this application, Applicant submits the above amendments and the following remarks. Claims 1, 17 and 18 have been amended. No new matter has been added. The claims as presented are now believed to be in allowable condition.

Objections to the Drawings

The Office Action objects to the Drawings but there is no indication which features are claimed are not shown. As such, Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102 and 35 U.S.C. § 103

In the Office Action, claims 1, 2, 4, 7, 9, 13-14 and 16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 1,247,033 (Swartz); claims 3 and 15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Swartz in view of U.S. Patent No. 2,487,536 (Fiscus); claim 5 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Swartz in view of U.S. Patent No. 651,058 (Rogers); claims 6 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Swartz. In addition, claims 1,2, 4, 7, 9, 10-14 and 16 stand rejected as being unpatentable over Swartz in U.S. Patent No. 1,361,981 (Goodnow). In addition, Claims 1-5, 7-14, 16 and 17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,542,314 (Sullivan) and claims 17-18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Swartz in view of Sullivan.

Based on the amendments and remarks contained herein each of the above recited rejections has been overcome and, therefore, Applicant traverses these rejections. At least one reason that each of the independent claims is patentable over the cited references is discussed in greater detail below.

Claims 1-12

As discussed above, claim 1 stands rejected as being anticipated by either Swartz or Sullivan or rendered obvious by Swartz in view of Goodnow.

Claim 1, as amended, is directed to a steering wheel workstation support for a laptop computer. The workstation of claim 1 includes a support portion, a lip, and a hook arrangement. The workstation of claim 1 also includes a standoff member, located on the back of the support

portion, that is positioned to cause the lower end of the support portion to be displaced from a lower part of the steering wheel. The standoff member has an edge distal with respect to the support portion, the standoff member also having base edges coupled to the support portion and the distal edge, the base edges being coupled to one another by a unitary piece of material.

Applicant does not observe any teaching or suggestion in the cited references to a steering wheel workstation that includes a standoff member, located on the back of a support portion, that has an edge distal with respect to the support portion and base edges coupled to the support portion and the distal edge where the base edges are coupled to one another by a unitary piece of material.

In particular, Swartz does not teach that the standoff member are located on the back of the support. Indeed, the only “standoff members” taught in Swartz are the feet bearing reference number 9. These feet are integral with the plate 1 and are merely bent back from the plate, not located on the back thereof. Furthermore, because Swartz is directed to a document holder for use in office setting, and not a support for a laptop computer in a car, Swartz does not teach or suggest that the standoff member be positioned to cause the lower end of the support portion to be displaced from a lower part of a steering wheel.

In addition, the standoff members (if such exist) taught by Swartz do not include an edge distal with respect to the support portion where base edges coupled to the support portion and the distal edge being coupled to one another by a unitary piece of material. In fact, Swartz does not teach a unitary piece of material that has an distal end and edges between the distal end and the support portion.

Swartz does not teach or suggest every element of claim 1 and the rejection to claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) is improper and should be withdrawn.

With respect to Sullivan, the standoff members 104 and 106 taught therein are arranged and configured to require at least two separate standoff members rather than the unitary piece of material recited in claim 1. In particular, standoff members 104 and 106 are portions of standards 92 and 94 (col. 4, lines 41-43). The standards 92 and 94 are separate pieces formed from rigid, circularly sectioned rods (col. 4, lines 32-33). The rods are not a substantially unitary piece of material – they are two separate pieces of material. In addition, the two separate pieces of material do not define a distal edge. As such, Sullivan does not teach or suggest each an every

element recited in claim 1 and, therefore, the rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) should be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Finally, Goodnow also fails to teach or suggest a standoff member that has an edge distal with respect to the support portion and base edges coupled to the support portion and the distal edge, the base edges being coupled to one another by a unitary piece of material. As such, the rejection of claim 1 over Swartz in view of Goodnow is improper for the reasons discussed above with respect to Swartz and that the shortcomings of Swartz described above are not satisfied by the teachings of Goodnow.

Claims 2-12 depend for from claim 1 and, therefore, are patentable for at least the same reasons.

Claims 13-16

As discussed above, claim 13 stands rejected as being anticipated by either Swartz or Sullivan.

Claim 13 is directed to a steering wheel workstation support for a laptop computer, the laptop computer having a base and a display foldingly related to one another, the base having a front edge. The steering wheel workstation of claim 13 includes, *interalia*, a support portion, a lip at the lower region of the support portion for receiving the front edge of the base of the laptop, and a hook arrangement disposed to hook onto a steering wheel in the upper region of the support portion. The steering wheel of claim 13 also includes a standoff member, located on the back of the support portion, that is positioned to cause the lower end of the support portion to be displaced from a lower part of the steering wheel. The standoff member of claim 13 is dimensioned and configured so as to permit the workstation support to be supported by the lip and the standoff member on a horizontal surface with the support portion at an obtuse angle relative to the horizontal, as measured from the front of the support portion, thereto less than 145 degrees.

Neither Swartz nor Sullivan teach or suggest a steering wheel workstation that includes a standoff member, located on the back of a support portion that is designed and configured so as to permit the workstation support to be supported by a lip and the standoff member on a horizontal surface. For instance, the only “support members” taught in Swartz are the feet bearing reference number 9. These feet are integral with the plate 1 and are merely bent back from the plate, not located on the back thereof. Applicants respectfully disagree with the

Examiner's position that the feet 9 are on the "back" of the support. Indeed the, the word "back" is defined as "The part or area farthest from the front." The feet 9 of Swartz are part of the front – not the area farthest from it. Reconsideration is requested.

Furthermore, Sullivan does not teach or suggest, and the Office Action does not assert, that the standoff member permits the workstation to be supported by the lip and the standoff member on a horizontal surface with the support portion at an obtuse angle relative to the horizontal, as measured from the front of the support portion, thereto less than 145 degrees. The Office Action, rather, merely states that the "intended use limitation do not impart any structure over the structures of the support in Sullivan." As amended, claim 13 states that the standoff is dimensioned and configured to achieve the specified function, namely, to allow the workstation to be supported on a horizontal surface with the support portion at an obtuse angle relative to the horizontal, as measured from the front of the support portion, thereto less than 145 degrees. This recitation is proper and similar such limitations have been held to "precisely define present structural attributes." MPEP § 2173.05 (g) (citing *In re Venezia*, 530 F.2d 956 (CCPA 1976)). As such, the rejection of claim 13 as being anticipated by Sullivan should be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully asserts that claim 13 is patentable over the cited references.

Claims 14-16 depend from claim 13 and, therefore, are patentable for at least the same reasons.

Claims 17 and 18

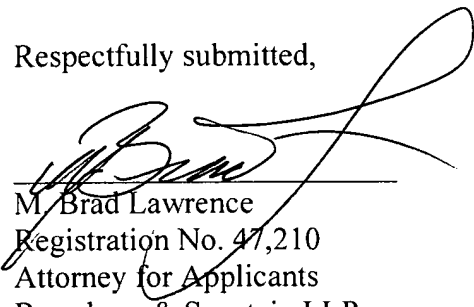
Claims 17 and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Swartz in view of Sullivan. Similar to claim 1 above, both claims 17 and 18 have been amended to include a limitation that workstation support that is provided in these method claims includes a standoff formed from a substantially unitary piece of material. Neither Swartz nor Sullivan teach or suggest providing such a workstation. Thus, claims 17 and 18 are both patentable over the cited references and the rejections thereto should be withdrawn.

Conclusion

Applicant respectfully requests that the examiner reconsider this application in view of all of the art. Applicant submits that the present application is in condition for allowance and early notice to that effect is respectfully solicited.

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Respectfully submitted,



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